

THE BLESSED BARRIER

By FANNIE HURST

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(WNU Service)

SOMEWHERE in the heart, the mind and the spirit of young Sterling was a barrier as high, practically, as his life was long. Had you even suggested anything of this to any member of the Buhlow family, they would have met the implication with loyal and heated denial.

How could Sterling secretly feel himself an outsider in the Buhlow family, when not one of the Buhlow children, although they had quite simply been told when they each became eight, had an atom of consciousness that Sterling was not blood brother? As a matter of fact, bending too far backward perhaps to achieve this end, Ann and Proscow Buhlow took pains to see to it that Sterling received even more than their own children of parental solicitude.

The fact that Sterling had been adopted by Ann during a previous marriage was as remote in the minds of her present husband and children as if it had never happened. Sterling belonged. As the senior member of a remarkably alert group of children, he was the acknowledged leader of the clan.

"Sterling is too outrageously clever," Ann was wont to remark of her alleged eldest, treating him in the colloquial young fashion of the modern mother. "He sets a dreadful example to the rest of the children. They have to live up to him."

"Sterling is not clever," Ann's really eldest, Shirley, would sing out on such occasions. "He's a soulless misanthrope, an acid-fingering cynic, a misbehaviorist, and he passes off among the unworshippers of my mother's generation as clever."

"Oh, Shirley, be yourself," Terry, two years below Shirley, would retort or the fling of a soft pillow. "You know you'd give your sleepy head to be as clever as Sterling."

"What Shirley can't be, she is not going to bid for," remarked her father, dodging in turn the same sofa pillow flung by Shirley toward him, that had been flung by Terry to his sister.

"Father, it is a good thing you make it a point to speak your true words in jest. Otherwise your family would never grant you a hearing."

Typical, all this, of the way Sterling stood in the admiration of his so-called parents and brothers and sisters. Not only the two older of the Buhlow children vested him thus in their full and enthusiastic approval, but the stepladder of younger ones followed suit with hero worshipping eyes.

"Sterling this," "Sterling that," "If I had Sterling's brains," "Sterling is the genius of this family," "If only Sterling would take the trouble he could be anything he set out to be!"

Something undoubtedly there was in Sterling. The something that would not take the trouble. Time after time, her sweet, anxious eyes scrutinizing this youth, Ann tried to analyze that trouble. Proscow, too, and as Ann said banteringly of her husband, as a famous alienist whose job it was to analyze the workings of the human brain, Proscow ought to be able to ferret out the way to attack the streak of cynical inertia in Sterling.

"Darling, with all your brains, isn't there anything you want to be?"

"I want my father to subsidize me with ten thousand a year as guarantee against the horrible thought of ever wanting to be anything."

"Sterling, won't you be serious just once? You're twenty now. The time has come when you simply have to decide what you want to do with your life. You're too talented! Music, Painting, Writing, I've a suspicion you can be a great person in any one of them."

"Perhaps."

"Proscow, you talk to him."

Curious, with any one of their own children, this problem would have been treated in quite another manner. In fact, the problem of Terry had already been handled with decision and the school for his medical training selected. With Sterling, just because of his equivocal position in the household, the dilemma of stimulating him to action was a subtle and troublesome one.

"You know after all, Sterling, your father, in spite of his wealth, could never be wealthy enough to encourage a dilettante in the family."

A flush ran beneath the pallor of the best-looking member of the Buhlows. Ann had struck in Proscow, and rightly, would off of his largesse much less Sterling, the outsider.

How to convey to these dear, warm, discreet people that gnawing, sickening sense of his outsideness, the very coloring of the eyes and hair of his five foster brothers and sisters was something Sterling could never look upon without the cold sense of being alien sweeping through the lonely inner moors of his desolation.

The Buhlows were blond, every one of them, blue-eyed, straw-haired. Dark, aloof, alone, he stood in their dear, kind world—the alien whose isolation no one dared mention. The alien, who by very virtue of the

anomaly of his position, was treated with considerations that hurt more than helped. All of his childhood, Sterling had yearned for the heartier reprimands handed out so unself-consciously to the Buhlow children. No childish dispute had ever been settled against him. The alien deferred to!

The same way now with his retarded decision. With not one other of his children would Proscow have been so indulgent. Terry was a concrete example. Even Shirley, the only girl in the group, had never met the quality of indulgence that had been meted out to Sterling.

It made the bitterness and the hurting and the secret gnawing pain of being special, and a little outside the dear, inner group of people who were dearer than dear to him, almost too vast to be borne.

It was not alone the sense of being the outsider, it was the knowledge that their unspoken sense of it kept them all so cruelly considerate, so deferential to his special position.

Not even his foster father was to sense this out as the secret of the curious problem confronting him in this foster son of his.

Too bad. Most gifted member of the family. Brains. Talent. Will get his bearings in time, of course. But a curious licked kind of psychology to the lad. Doesn't care a great deal about anything. Fine intelligence. High strung, but not unduly nervous. Sensitive, of course. But somewhere in the machinery of the boy's fine mind, a monkey wrench.

For a while Shirley had seemed to have easiest access to the confidence of Sterling. They were so close; so filled with admiration, each for the other. Their entire childhood had been like that. Merciless in their repartee, glib and banter, they were nonetheless closer than any other two of the children.

But then at this stage, when more than ever Sterling had become the noncommittal dilettante, even Shirley had fallen back defeated. Something was eating Sterling.

However, in the end it was Shirley who was to find her way into the tormented labyrinth of Sterling's dilemma.

The recital of his years of secret anguish and hurt and jealousies came from him one night in a torrent, on the heels of a discussion they had been having together on the subject of his refusal to compete for an art prize.

Sentence by sentence, revealing commitment by commitment, the strange secret tortures of the years lay revealed.

"I'm too jealous, Shirley. Too eaten with the devilish pain of being an outsider to the people I love best in the world, to care about anything. I'm licked before I start. You can't want anything badly enough to go out and get it when you're eaten with a devil like that. It will always be that way with me. Homesickness, heart sickness, to be one of a group that will always too consciously and conscientiously try to make me think I am what I am not."

"You fool," said Shirley, after hours of letting this too long dammed-up confession flow from him. "You darling, blessed, adorable idiot. The only thing, Sterling, that has made all these late years of mine the grand luminous years that they have been, is the fact that you are not one of us in the sense you mean. Fool, Darling idiot. Please, please don't sit there pretending you don't know what I mean. Sterling—how terrible it would be if really you were of us."

Suddenly, seeing her there in a radiance that was as beautiful as it was unmistakable to him, Sterling did see . . . and seeing, came to bless the fact that he was not one of them!

Coal Mined in Great Britain Since Year 1239

The first charter giving liberty to the town of Newcastle-upon-Tyne to dig coal was granted by Henry III in 1239, and was denominated "sea coal" on account of its being shipped to places at a distance. In the year 1281, this trade had so extended that laws were passed for its regulation.

In Scotland coal was worked at about the same time and a charter was granted in 1291, in favor of the abbot and convent of Dumfermline, in the county of Fife, giving the right of digging coal to the lands of Pittencrieff, adjoining the convent.

Coal began to be used for smelting about the beginning of the Seventeenth century.

The working of coal gradually increased until the beginning of the Eighteenth century, when the steam engine was brought forward in the year 1705, and was applied to collieries in the vicinity of Newcastle about the year 1715. This engine produced a new era in the mining concerns at Great Britain and collieries were opened in every quarter and the coal trade increased to an astonishing extent.

Biblical "Slips"

Our recent note on a clergyman's discovery that a Bible verse ran: "Gird up thy lions," instead of "joins," brought from correspondents letters concerning other errors that have slipped into this and kindred religious works. Thus in one Bible an error in punctuation made a certain passage run: "The wicked flee, when no man pursueth the righteous, is as bold as a lion."

And the omission of a letter in a passage in the Book of Common Prayer made it run: "We shall all be hanged in the twinkling of an eye."—Boston Transcript.

Modern Contract Bridge

No. 5

Distributional Values

WHEN your hand indicates that a suit take-out is the best policy, but the sum of your honor-tricks is below the yardstick measurement for game, you should declare only a sufficient number of tricks to cover your partner's bid. In taking out with a no trump, use the yardstick measurement, bidding one or two no trumps according to the indications of your partnership holding in honor-tricks. In short, whenever you are taking out and it is still uncertain whether your partnership hands will prove congenial at your new bid, you must tread gingerly unless the sum of your honor-tricks spells "GAME."

Often however, when your partner has made an original suit bid of one, there may enter into your response a factor which justifies you in totally disregarding the yardstick measurement of honor-tricks, so important in most responses. This factor is the distribution of your hand. If your hand is so favorably distributed as to show great length in your partner's suit, length in a second suit and complete absence of a third, as for example: S-Q 10 9 8 7 6, H-5, D-none, C-10 9 8 6 5 3, when your partner has bid a spade, you could ignore your lack of honor-tricks and jump immediately into a game bid. Such a proceeding would be justified by the fact that your spade strength would so solidify your partner's trump holding as to promise no losers in that suit; your length in clubs offers the probability of setting up some epg cards or giving your partner repeated ruffing opportunities, and most important of all in compensating for your deficit of honor-tricks, your short and missing suits would enable you to trump off your opponent's defensive strength in honor-tricks. It is certain that no more than one honor-trick in hearts could be cashed against you, and none at all in diamonds. So that even though your partnership total of honor-tricks sums up only to the 2½ which your partner's original bid guaranteed, your practical certainty of breaking down the opponent's defense is equivalent to a strong honor-trick holding when reckoned for its assisting value to your partner.

Playing Tricks

As a rule the last thing that a contract player learns is the most important thing he should know. That is, how to count the playing tricks in his hand.

Playing tricks are the general tricks your own hand may be expected to take if your declaration or your partner's declaration becomes final. When making an opening bid at no trumps, it is rarely possible to locate playing tricks, other than honor-tricks, because you have no definite long strong suit to establish. (With a biddable suit, you would not declare no trump.) But the count of honor-tricks in the hand will automatically include a proportionate amount of low card tricks.

When shifting into a no trump, or entering a later stage of the bidding with a no trump declaration, it is often possible to count definite playing tricks according to the location of strength shown by others bids or by the fact of a strong minor suit in your own or your partner's hand which can be set up. But for opening no trump bids and no trump raises and rebids, there is no better guide than the wardstick count of honor-tricks.

The direct and simple method of counting honor-tricks, so helpful in valuing no trumps, will not answer for raises and rebids at declared trumps, which must be played under totally different conditions. As a matter of fact, the difference in play of no trump and suit hands creates two almost totally different games; so that a separate system of valuation must necessarily be used for each.

The count of playing tricks at a suit bid is an easy matter for a player of long experience and judgment. Fortunately for the average player, in the approach-forcing system what is an unconscious mental process with the expert has been translated into a concrete form known as the distributional count. The distributional count may be mastered in half an hour's study, and once clearly comprehended, enables any team of players to value their hands at suit bids with the precision of experts.

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(WNU Service)

Angling Pro and Con

Izaak Walton said: "We may say of angling as Doctor Boteler said of strawberries: 'Doubtless God could have made a better berry, but doubtless God never did'; and so, (if I might be judge) God never did make a more calm, quiet, innocent recreation than angling. But Doctor Johnson, a much more erudite man, defined a fishing rod as 'a stick with a hook at one end and a fool at the other.'"

Civilization Built on Coal

Today's civilization requires more work than human labor can perform. The dominant source of brain replacing energy is coal. We are today using 20 times as much coal per capita as we did in 1850. Coal is the most important source of energy in our modern industrial civilization and has made our national life into a complicated network of interdependent groups with duties to each other.

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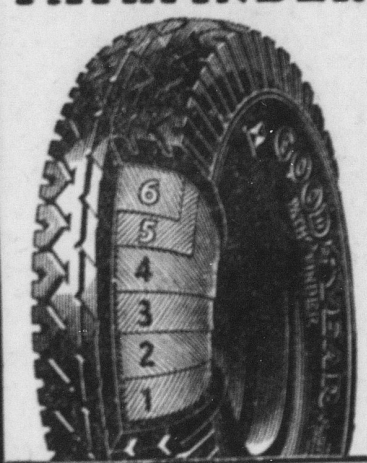
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PATHFINDER



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30 x 4.50-21 Each, in pairs . . . \$5.27 \$5.43 per single tire

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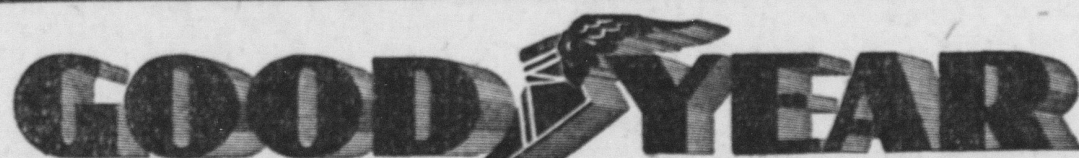
SPEEDWAY

Full Oversize 30 x 4.50-21 \$3.83 Ford Chevrolet Price per single tire Each \$3.95 In pairs	Full Oversize 30 x 5.00-20 \$4.80 Essex Nash Price per single tire Each \$4.95 In pairs
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Full Oversize 29 x 4.50-20 \$3.79 Chevrolet Price per single tire Each \$3.99 In pairs	Full Oversize 28 x 5.25-18 \$5.39 Chrysler Buick Price per single tire Each \$5.55 In pairs
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Full Oversize 28 x 4.75-19 \$4.50 Ford Chevrolet Plymouth Price per single tire Each \$4.63 In pairs	Full Oversize 31 x 5.25-21 \$5.82 Buick Dodge Nash Price per single tire Each \$5.98 In pairs
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Full Oversize 29 x 5.00-19 \$4.72 Chrysler Dodge Nash Price per single tire Each \$4.85 In pairs	30 x 3½ Reg. Cl. \$3.30 Ford—Model T Price per single tire Each \$3.39 In pairs
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Many good housekeepers have formed the habit of reading their newspaper with a pencil and paper, ready to jot down the articles they wish to look at when they start out on their shopping tour. Try this method. It saves time, and saves money, and provides you with the pick of the day's merchandise.

Every advertisement has a message all its own.